#Eval4Action

youth in evaluation

be a champion!

Standards for enhancing meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation

Academia

2023

Decade of
EVALUATION
for action

#Eval4Action

Contents

Foreword

With the world population at 8 billion, harnessing demographic shifts is critical to accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and responding to global crises such as the climate emergency. To achieve an inclusive and sustainable world, it is crucial that we create opportunities and spaces in all spheres, including evaluation, for the increasing youth population. The United Nations Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda highlights the importance of intergenerational collaboration to address the complex issues we face today.

The Eval4Action campaign – co-led by the UNFPA Evaluation Office, EvalYouth Global Network and the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation – launched the Youth in Evaluation initiative at a celebratory event in May 2022. At this event, the Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr Natalia Kanem, released a manifesto on meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. This occasion brought together various evaluation partners, young and emerging evaluators, other members of the global evaluation community, and youth at large to celebrate and commit to enhanced youth engagement in evaluation.

The Youth in Evaluation manifesto, published in six languages, has been adopted widely, including by governments, international agencies, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), academia, youth organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The governments of Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, India, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda have endorsed the manifesto. In addition, the ILO Evaluation Office, UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, UNFPA Evaluation Office, World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank, Independent Development Evaluation at the African Development Bank, and the Centers for Learning on Evaluations and Results (CLEAR) for Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia have also adopted the manifesto.

Building on this global momentum, the Eval4Action campaign and its partners initiated the development of standards to enhance meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. Given the unique contexts of stakeholders, specific standards have been developed for six stakeholder groups: academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. All six standards are available here.

These standards aim to enhance the accountability and promote the effective engagement of youth in evaluation, thereby fulfilling the commitment outlined in the manifesto. These standards provide practical guidance and pathways for organizations of all types to achieve meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. The standards were launched at the Youth in Evaluation Week (April 2023) and made publicly available.

Regardless of whether an organization has signed the manifesto, we encourage all interested organizations to use the standards to strengthen their capacity to engage youth in all phases of evaluation. If you have questions regarding the use of the standards, please write to us at contact@eval4action.org.

Marco Segone, Director, UNFPA Evaluation Office

Gabriela Rentería Flores, Chair, EvalYouth Global Network

Kabir Hashim, Chair, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation

1. Background

i. What is the Youth in Evaluation initiative?

The United Nations Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda emphasizes the urgency of intergenerational solidarity in all areas as a key solution for the complex global challenges facing the world today. In this context, Eval4Action launched the Youth in Evaluation initiative in May 2022, calling upon the global evaluation community to commit to concrete action towards long-term, sustainable and meaningful engagement of young and emerging evaluators (YEEs), and youth at large, in evaluation by signing and implementing a manifesto.

The manifesto on meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation has so far been adopted by over 600 organizations and individuals (as of March 2023). By adopting the manifesto, the organizations and individuals commit to undertake strategic and concerted efforts to build the capacities of YEEs and to engage youth and YEEs meaningfully in all stages of evaluation.

_____

Sign the Youth in Evaluation manifesto!

Arabic | English | French | Russian | Spanish | Swahili

List of manifesto adoptees

_____

ii. In what ways can the standards enhance youth engagement in evaluation?

The Youth in Evaluation initiative has mobilized a wide range of stakeholders, including academia, governments, international organizations, public institutions, the private sector, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) and youth organizations, to adopt the manifesto to enhance youth engagement in evaluation. For real change to be achieved, the commitments in the manifesto must be translated into practice. To support stakeholders in identifying and implementing actions most suited to their context, specific standards have been developed for academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. These standards serve as a tool for self-accountability and for initiating and improving practice for enhancing meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. While the standards offer

a range of actions to advance youth engagement in evaluation, stakeholders are not limited to these actions and can undertake additional measures as well.

This resource includes standards and an assessment guide for academic institutions to advance meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. The standards for governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations are available [here](#).

iii. How were the standards developed?

The standards to enhance meaningful youth engagement in evaluation were co-created through intergenerational and participatory dialogues with six stakeholder groups: academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. For each stakeholder group, a task force was established following self-nominations from across the world. The six task forces co-created the standards for their stakeholder group, following a highly inclusive process, through a series of consultative meetings from September 2022 to March 2023. In addition, the consultations served as an advocacy mechanism and networking platform for each stakeholder group.

iv. What do the standards contain?

The standards for each stakeholder group cover six dimensions:

Dimension	Definition
1. Leadership and accountability	Leadership in the organization is committed to youth in evaluation.
2. Practice	The organization's evaluation guidelines and tools include youth participation in all evaluation phases, focusing on the diversity of youth.
3. Advocacy and capacity development	National governments and local partners are mobilized to meaningfully engage youth in evaluation.
4. Knowledge management and communication	The value of engaging youth in evaluation through communications and knowledge management is promoted.
5. Human resources	Access of young professionals to the evaluation labour market is facilitated.
6. Financial resources	Necessary resources are allocated to support meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation in the annual budget.

In each of the six dimensions, the standards are organized into four categories:

1. **Minimum requirement**

2. **Approaching minimum requirement**

3. **Meeting minimum requirement**

4. **Exceeding minimum requirement**

Section v contains guidance on rating each of the dimensions and overall assessment of the implementation of the standards for academia.

v. How should the standards be used?

a. Generating internal support to implement the standards

Strong leadership, accountability and a comprehensive understanding of the standards are critical for the implementation of the standards in an academic institution. An academic institution, division or work unit can spearhead the implementation of the standards. In this regard, the following two steps are proposed:

1. **Create institutional buy-in for the standard.** Leadership commitment to youth in evaluation is a prerequisite to implementing the standards. Academic institutions interested in applying the standards in their operations should organize a meeting with key members and colleagues to raise awareness of the importance of enhancing youth engagement in evaluation and the role of standards in facilitating this. In addition, this is an opportunity to consult the team on how to implement the standards in the academic institution with active contributions from all units/colleagues.

2. **Appoint a committee or focal point/s for coordination.** The focal point/s or committee should ensure that the academic institution takes the necessary steps in implementing, monitoring and reporting progress related to the standards. While the focal point/s or committee focus on overall coordination, the implementation of the standards is the responsibility of the entire institution/division/work unit. The focal point/s or committee should also ensure that the implementation of the standards is incorporated into the institutional work plan, with clear roles and responsibilities.

b. Assessing and monitoring the uptake of the standards

Self-assessment and monitoring are key elements in the implementation of the standards and can help inform an academic institution's actions to enhance youth engagement in evaluation. Self-assessment and monitoring tools can be used to:

- Assess which requirements are already being met or practiced

- Identify gaps in meetings requirements

- Plan for meeting the remaining requirements.

The outcomes of the assessment can be presented to a wider audience in the academic institution for review and analysis and can be used for planning. The results can be shared in the institution's annual report and can also be used for awareness raising within the institution.

Academic institutions are requested to share the outcomes of their self-assessment with the Eval4Action campaign coordinator annually by 31 March each year, by writing to contact@eval4action.org. The information will help Eval4Action to analyze and report on the number of (anonymized) institutions that are approaching, meeting and exceeding the requirements, identify which requirements are most challenging to meet and provide guidance on how to accelerate the implementation of the standards. In addition, Eval4Action can support the sharing of best practices in using and assessing the standards.

2. Standards for academia to meaningfully engage youth in evaluation

1. Leadership and accountability

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
1.1 Academic institution commitment to the youth in evaluation manifesto	1.1.1 Academic institution declares commitment to meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation by signing the Youth in Evaluation manifesto	1.1.2 The academic institution takes action to deliver on the commitment	1.1.3 The academic institution reviews the commitment and report on its progress
1.2 Leadership support for the institutional policy on teaching evaluation	1.2.1 Leadership support the development of an institutional policy on teaching evaluation in undergraduate courses irrespective of discipline	1.2.2 Availability of institutional policies on academic development, quality control, and research and training that integrate evaluation	1.2.3 Availability of an action plan led by the leadership at the institutional level to orient students on evaluation, following the policy
1.3 Leadership support for the policy on evaluation courses	1.3.1 Leadership support the policy decision on standalone courses on evaluation offered by the institution	1.3.2 Academic institution takes initiative to develop and offer standalone courses on evaluation	1.3.3 Academic institution incorporates modules on evaluation into existing courses

2. Practice

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
2.1 Curriculum development on evaluation	2.1.1 Curriculum on evaluation is developed by the institution as (1) a module in existing courses and/or (2) a standalone course	2.1.2 Inclusion of core and elective courses in the curriculum that offer a basic understanding of evaluation, including methods and tools	2.1.3 Teaching faculty is oriented/trained to undertake curriculum on evaluation
2.2 Capacity-building on academic courses	2.2.1 Courses related to development, governance and public policy offer adequate teaching on evaluation in the related fields	2.2.2 Capacity-building workshops are organized by institutions that are beyond the formal curriculum of the academic programmes conducted by the institution	2.2.3 A long-term academic programme is launched to build the capacities of students in evaluation
2.3 Establishment of academic units	2.3.1 Institutions take the initiative to establish academic units for evaluation	2.3.2 Institutions establish academic units for evaluation	2.3.3 Academic units for evaluation offer and manage courses on evaluation
2.4 Young graduates from diverse groups are considered for learning opportunities on evaluation	2.4.1 Learning opportunities on evaluation incorporate diversity considerations for participation of young graduates	2.4.2 Diverse youth participate in learning opportunities on evaluation	2.4.3 Young graduates from diverse groups get an opportunity to be emerging evaluators

3. Advocacy and capacity development

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
3.1 Create opportunities for evaluation experience	3.1.1 Design an academic–industry/policy/market/government interface mechanism through which students can be exposed to the real-world evaluation experience	3.1.2 Engage students with evaluation stakeholders through formal and informal interactions in the form of events, workshops and lecture series	3.1.3 Students get internships in the industry/development sector/government on evaluation assignments to gain hands-on experience
3.2 Initiating academic courses on evaluation	3.2.1 Institutions advocate with the university regulatory body (e.g. University Grants Commission) to promote academic courses on evaluation	3.2.2 University regulatory body approves academic courses on evaluation	3.2.3 Academic courses on evaluation are initiated

4. Knowledge management and communication

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
4.1 Stakeholder engagement for knowledge management	4.1.1 Institutions engage with stakeholders in the evaluation ecosystem to produce knowledge on evaluation, including on meaningful youth engagement in evaluation	4.1.2 Knowledge on evaluation that is produced, including on meaningful youth engagement in evaluation, is widely disseminated to provide broad access to all stakeholders	4.1.3 The evaluation community, including youth and YEEs, utilizes the knowledge on evaluation, including on meaningful youth engagement in evaluation

4.2 Encourage research on topics related to evaluation	4.2.1 Institutions encourage research on evaluation topics through academic programmes including undergraduate/masters /PhD programmes conducted by the faculty	4.2.2 Institutions encourage supervision of research on evaluation topics through academic programmes including undergraduate/masters /PhD programmes conducted by the faculty	4.2.3 Institutions publish research on evaluation
4.3 Communication and advocacy on topics related to youth in evaluation	4.3.1 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made at events held at the university	4.3.2 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made at external events	4.3.3 The academic institution hosts evaluation conferences focused on the theme of youth in evaluation

5. Human resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
5.1 Placement of students in evaluation jobs	5.1.1 Institutions include organizations that work on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and hire M&E professionals in their placements database and invite them to hire fresh graduates	5.1.2 Evaluation-focused organizations/firms participate in the placements process	5.1.3 Evaluation-focused organizations/firms recruit the graduates for M&E-related roles
5.2 Capacity-building of teaching faculty	5.2.1 Institutions decide to hire faculty staff with experience in teaching evaluation	5.2.2 Institutions hire faculty staff with experience in teaching evaluation	5.2.3 Capacity-building for faculty staff provided by institutions

6. Financial resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
6.1 Financial support for academic research	6.1.1 Provisions for financial support for students who undertake innovative work/internships/research in the evaluation domain	6.1.2 Financial support for students becomes part of the annual budgetary exercise/allocations of the institution	6.1.3 The institution rewards those students who undertake evaluation-related work/internships/research
6.2 Resource allocation for academic courses	6.2.1 Institutions include allocations for academic courses on evaluation in annual budgets	6.2.2 Academic courses on evaluation are sufficiently resourced	6.2.3 Academic courses on evaluation have resources on a regular basis

3. Guide for assessing the implementation of the standards

This assessment guide explains how to assess the standards for academia.

i. Assessment categories

The standards for academia cover six dimensions, namely, leadership and accountability, practice, advocacy and capacity development, knowledge management and communication, human resources and financial resources.

In each of these six dimensions the standards are organized into four categories – minimum requirement, approaching minimum requirement, meeting minimum requirement, and exceeding minimum requirement – displaying a spectrum.

The minimum requirement describes what needs to be in place within the academic institution to advance youth engagement in evaluation. "Approaching" the minimum requirement describes meeting the initial level of the requirement. "Meeting" the minimum requirement describes meeting the requirement to a greater degree than "approaching" the minimum requirement. "Exceeding" the minimum requirement describes meeting the requirement at an advanced level, and is the highest level expected, although academic institutions are free to achieve levels beyond this.

ii. Rating the standards

A score for each dimension and category can be assigned, as per the tables ahead. If the academic institution does not meet the criteria for "approaching", "meeting" or "exceeding" a minimum requirement, the minimum requirement is considered to be "missing" and the academic institution scores 0 points on that dimension. If the academic institution fulfills the criterion for "approaching" the minimum requirement, it scores 1 point. "Meeting" the minimum requirement results in a score of 2 points and "exceeding" the minimum requirement results in a score of 3 points. If an academic institution fulfills the criteria for both "approaching" and "meeting" the minimum requirement, it scores 3 points (1 + 2 points). If all criteria are met, the academic institution scores 6 points (1 + 2 + 3 points).

For example, in the leadership and accountability dimension, if the institutional leadership supports the policy decision on standalone courses on evaluation, the academic institution scores 1 point. If the institution takes the initiative to develop and

offer standalone courses, the institution scores 2 points. If the institution incorporates modules on evaluation into existing courses, it scores 3 points. If the institution has 1.3.1, 1.3.2 and 1.3.3 in place, it scores 6 points. The total number of points for each category and dimension should be recorded in the final column of each table.

iii. Rating tables for the standards for academia

Download the editable rating table here.

1. Leadership and accountability

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
1.1 Academic institution commitment to the youth in evaluation manifesto	1.1.1 Academic institution declares commitment to meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation by signing the Youth in Evaluation manifesto	1.1.2 The academic institution takes action to deliver on the commitment	1.1.3 The academic institution reviews the commitment and report on its progress	
0	1	2	3	
1.2 Leadership support for the institutional policy on teaching evaluation	1.2.1 Leadership support the development of an institutional policy on teaching evaluation in undergraduate courses irrespective of discipline	1.2.2 Availability of institutional policies on academic development, quality control, and research and training that integrate evaluation	1.2.3 Availability of an action plan led by the leadership at the institutional level to orient students on evaluation, following the policy	
0	1	2	3	
1.3 Leadership support for the policy on evaluation courses	1.3.1 Leadership support the policy decision on standalone courses on evaluation offered by the institution	1.3.2 Academic institution takes initiative to develop and offer standalone courses on evaluation	1.3.3 Academic institution incorporates modules on evaluation into existing courses	
0	1	2	3	
Total points for leadership and accountability				

2. Practice

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
2.1 Curriculum development on evaluation	2.1.1 Curriculum on evaluation is developed by the institution as (1) a module in existing courses and/or (2) a standalone course	2.1.2 Inclusion of core and elective courses in the curriculum that offer a basic understanding of evaluation, including methods and tools	2.1.3 Teaching faculty is oriented/trained to undertake curriculum on evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
2.2 Capacity-building on academic courses	2.2.1 Courses related to development, governance and public policy offer adequate teaching on evaluation in the related fields	2.2.2 Capacity-building workshops are organized by institutions that are beyond the formal curriculum of the academic programmes conducted by the institution	2.2.3 A long-term academic programme is launched to build the capacities of students in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
2.3 Establishment of academic units	2.3.1 Institutions take the initiative to establish academic units for evaluation	2.3.2 Institutions establish academic units for evaluation	2.3.3 Academic units for evaluation offer and manage courses on evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
2.4 Young graduates from diverse groups are considered for learning opportunities on evaluation	2.4.1 Learning opportunities on evaluation incorporate diversity considerations for participation of young graduates	2.4.2 Diverse youth participate in learning opportunities on evaluation	2.4.3 Young graduates from diverse groups get an opportunity to be emerging evaluators	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for practice	

3. Advocacy and capacity development

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
3.1 Create opportunities for evaluation experience	3.1.1 Design an academic–industry/policy/market/government interface mechanism through which students can be exposed to the real-world evaluation experience	3.1.2 Engage students with evaluation stakeholders through formal and informal interactions in the form of events, workshops and lecture series	3.1.3 Students get internships in the industry/development sector/government on evaluation assignments to gain hands-on experience	
0	1	2	3	
3.2 Initiating academic courses on evaluation	3.2.1 Institutions advocate with the university regulatory body (e.g. University Grants Commission) to promote academic courses on evaluation	3.2.2 University regulatory body approves academic courses on evaluation	3.2.3 Academic courses on evaluation are initiated	
0	1	2	3	
Total points for advocacy and capacity development				

4. Knowledge management and communication

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
4.1 Stakeholder engagement for knowledge management	4.1.1 Institutions engage with stakeholders in the evaluation ecosystem to produce knowledge on evaluation, including on meaningful youth engagement in evaluation	4.1.2 Knowledge on evaluation that is produced, including on meaningful youth engagement in evaluation, is widely disseminated to provide broad access to all stakeholders	4.1.3 The evaluation community, including youth and YEEs, utilizes the knowledge on evaluation, including on meaningful youth engagement in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
4.2 Encourage research on topics related to evaluation	4.2.1 Institutions encourage research on evaluation topics through academic programmes including undergraduate/masters/PhD programmes conducted by the faculty	4.2.2 Institutions encourage supervision of research on evaluation topics through academic programmes including undergraduate/masters/PhD programmes conducted by the faculty	4.2.3 Institutions publish research on evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
4.3 Communication and advocacy on topics related to youth in evaluation	4.3.1 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made at events held at the university	4.3.2 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made at external events	4.3.3 The academic institution hosts evaluation conferences focused on the theme of youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
Total points for knowledge management and communication				

5. Human resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
5.1 Placement of students in evaluation jobs	5.1.1 Institutions include organizations that work on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and hire M&E professionals in their placements database and invite them to hire fresh graduates	5.1.2 Evaluation-focused organizations/firms participate in the placements process	5.1.3 Evaluation-focused organizations/firms recruit the graduates for M&E-related roles	
0	1	2	3	
5.2 Capacity-building of teaching faculty	5.2.1 Institutions decide to hire faculty staff with experience in teaching evaluation	5.2.2 Institutions hire faculty staff with experience in teaching evaluation	5.2.3 Capacity-building for faculty staff provided by institutions	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for human resources	

6. Financial resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
6.1 Financial support for academic research	6.1.1 Provisions for financial support for students who undertake innovative work/internships/research in the evaluation domain	6.1.2 Financial support for students becomes part of the annual budgetary exercise/allocations of the institution	6.1.3 The institution rewards those students who undertake evaluation-related work/internships/ research	
0	1	2	3	

6.2 Resource allocation for academic courses	6.2.1 Institutions include allocations for academic courses on evaluation in annual budgets	6.2.2 Academic courses on evaluation are sufficiently resourced	6.2.3 Academic courses on evaluation have resources on a regular basis	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for financial resources	

iv. Overall performance of the academic institution

Once the rating is determined for each dimension, the summary scores can be added to the below table to analyze the current status of the academic institution in terms of meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. This analysis will be helpful for the academic institution to understand which dimensions are stronger and which need further attention, so that necessary actions can be planned.

#	Dimension	Score
1	Leadership and accountability	
2	Practice	
3	Advocacy and capacity development	
4	Knowledge management and communication	
5	Human resources	
6	Financial resources	
	Total	

The **overall performance** of the academic institution can be determined using the categories below:

- Overall rating 0 to 24 – missing minimum requirement

- Overall rating 25 to 48 – approaching minimum requirement

- Overall rating from 49 to 72 – meeting minimum requirement

- Overall rating from 73 to 96 – exceeding minimum requirement

Once the overall performance has been determined, the academic institution can make recommendations for future improvement, which can be addressed in the institution's strategic plan. The analysis and recommendations of the assessment can be included in the academic institution's annual report and subsequent progress reports. Eval4Action recommends that the assessment is conducted annually by the institution.

v. Next steps and improvement plan

The leadership of the academic institution can use the outcome of the assessment for decision-making. Based on the analysis and recommendations of the assessment, the leaders of the academic institution can decide on the next steps and prepare an improvement plan that advances youth engagement in evaluation.

Please write to contact@eval4action.org to provide any feedback on the standards.

Annex: Intergenerational task force members

i. Shyam Singh, Associate Professor in Social Sciences, Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA)

ii. Kwadwo Adusei, Senior Lecturer, Social Science, School of Arts and Humanities, Edith Cowan University

iii. Bilal Alsalihi, Board Member, EvalYemen

iv. Zach Tilton, Representative, EvalYouth

v. Siyabonga Sibiya, Representative, EvalYouth

Decade of EVALUATION for action

#Eval4Action

be a champion for enhancing meaningful
engagement of youth in evaluation

eval4action.org